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RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

[without reference to a Main Committee (A/46/41, A/46/L.53, A/46/L.56)]

46/151. Final review and appraisal of the implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions S-13/2 of 1 June 1986, the annex to which contains the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990, 42/163 of 8 December 1987, in which, inter alia, it decided to establish an Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole for the mid-term review and appraisal of the Programme of Action, and 43/27 of 18 November 1988 on the mid-term review and appraisal of the implementation of the Programme of Action,

Recalling also Economic and Social Council resolution 1990/75 of 27 July 1990 on the final review and appraisal of the Programme of Action,

Recalling further its resolution 45/178 A of 19 December 1990 on the final review and appraisal of the implementation of the Programme of Action,

Noting that the final review and appraisal of the implementation of the Programme of Action by the General Assembly has been an occasion for an in-depth assessment of the actions taken in the implementation of the Programme of Action and of the measures that are needed to sustain accelerated growth and development in Africa beyond 1991,

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General on the critical economic situation in Africa: final review and appraisal of the implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990, 1/

1/ A/46/324 and Add.1.

Taking note of the memorandum prepared by the Conference of Ministers of the Economic Commission for Africa to the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole of the General Assembly on the final review and appraisal of the implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990, 2/

Taking note also of Africa's submission on the final review and appraisal of the implementation of the Programme of Action to the General Assembly at its forty-sixth session, 3/

Taking note further of the contribution made by individual Governments, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations to the work of the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole,

1. Takes note of the report of the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole of the General Assembly on the final review and appraisal of the implementation of the Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990; 4/

2. Adopts the conclusions of the final review and appraisal of the implementation of the Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990, consisting of the assessment of the implementation of the Programme of Action and the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s, as set forth in the annex to the present resolution;

3. Requests Governments, organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to take appropiate measures in order to implement the commitments contained in the New Agenda;

4. Requests the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session on the implementation of the New Agenda.

77th plenary meeting
18 December 1991

2/ A/46/280, annex.

3/ A/46/387, annex.

4/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 41 (A/46/41).

ANNEX

I. ASSESSMENT OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR AFRICAN ECONOMIC RECOVERY AND DEVELOPMENT 1986-1990

A. PREAMBLE

1. The United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990 did not quite become a focal point for economic policy or for resource mobilization on behalf of Africa.

2. Furthermore, the Programme of Action proved to be too optimistic in two basic senses. First, the concept of a global compact at the continental level was difficult to achieve. Specific arrangements, such as World Bank consultative groups and United Nations Development Programme round-table discussions for individual nations, were not always directly related to the goals and targets of the Programme of Action. Second, hopes for a favourable external economic environment for Africa during the period 1986-1990 were not fulfilled. Sharp export price falls, real interest rate increases, and declines in private sector investment and loans all severely limited the positive effects of efforts made by Africa and its development partners. The Programme of Action itself was silent regarding who was to act if unforeseen exogenous contingencies threw the Programme of Action off course; also, its review machinery did not clearly address this issue.

3. In most African States, it is recognized that revised economic reforms and good governance are a key to economic development. It is also accepted that recovery and renewed development will take longer to achieve than was hoped and projected in 1986 by Africa, as well as by donor States and international financial institutions.

4. Bilateral cooperating partners have recognized that speedy, low-cost turn-arounds are the exception, not the rule, or as several have explicitly noted, the time-frame for economic transformation and for agreed agendas for action should be seen in terms of decades, not years. In addition, perception has come much closer to African warnings of the damage done by the debt overhang and worsening terms of trade. Substantial action to overcome these obstacles to African recovery is now agreed to be urgent.

5. The World Bank recognizes that sustained structural adjustment without rapid return to positive real per capita growth rates is difficult, especially in a context of broadening participation and political liberalization. The World Bank also views increased spending on human investment, infrastructure and reduction of absolute poverty as a central priority now that structural adjustment is placed in a ten- to fifteen-year time perspective, gradually phasing into structural transformation. These views are also widely shared by the donor communities and by African Governments. In general, the results achieved by those countries that have embarked on structural transformation have been better than those of countries that have not.

6. The reworking of United Nations system programmes in Africa around the goals of the Programme of Action was real and sustained but, by itself, was by no means large enough to place those goals at the centre of policy dialogue or resource mobilization.

7. Over the period 1986-1990 there developed broad agreement on the lines of short- and medium-term policy and on the need for that policy to lay the foundations for long-term sustainable growth and transformation. The African Alternative Framework to Structural Adjustment Programmes for Socio-economic Recovery and Transformation, 5/ adopted by the Conference of Ministers of the Economic Commission for Africa on 10 April 1989, and the World Bank long-term perspective study 6/ illustrate this in their very broad range of agreement on goals and instruments. The remaining divergence, while substantial, is largely on issues of timing, sequencing, contexts and balance of instruments. A reduction of the external debt burden of most African States and an enabling environment would make a valuable contribution to sustained development. A consensus needs to develop on how this can be achieved.

8. At some point in the 1990s, a legitimate post-apartheid Government will emerge in South Africa, whose changing role in the economy of Africa will be significant but cannot yet be defined. Because a high rate of absolute poverty and very low human investment in a majority of its people will be the heritage of apartheid, post-apartheid South Africa may require external resource inflows, including official development assistance, although these inflows cannot yet be quantified and are not included in the total targets presented for Africa and its development partners in the 1990s.

9. Many of the African States have made progress in meeting their policy restructuring and resource reallocation commitments. However, none of the goals of the Programme of Action were fully realized. Targets for growth, food security, human investment and debt reduction were missed, so declines rather than hoped-for increases have been recorded by many States and for Africa as a whole.

10. One of the principal causes of this decline was that only two thirds of the countries pursued sustained economic reform. Those that did received increased donor assistance and achieved modest gains in per capita gross domestic product, agricultural production and exports. Other countries continued to decline in these indices, causing negative performance for Africa as a whole.

11. The reasons for this record of non-success are clear. The bilateral and multilateral achievements with respect to net real resource transfers and debt burden reduction were below expectations. A number of African States did not, in fact, fully achieve policy and resource allocation adjustment and transformation. Africa suffered from a serious fall in commodity earnings. War and certain exogenous events, such as drought and collapse in the terms of trade, imposed devastating costs. Another reason for this record of non-success may have been inadequate United Nations and Government debate or dialogue on the experience gained in the implementation of the Programme of Action.

12. However, the Programme of Action was far from being a failure. It assisted in focusing the attention of African and other Governments on the basic economic, human and governance problems of Africa. By doing so, it did

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5/ A/44/315, annex.

6/ World Bank, Sub-Saharan Africa: From Crisis to Sustainable Growth (Washington, D.C., 1989).

achieve policy and efficiency gains and averted a more severe decline in net resource inflows. As a result, the economic decline afflicting Africa from 1981 to 1985 was slowed and, in many countries, halted. Furthermore, the process of African policy restructuring and its interaction with the analyses of external partners have led to substantial lessons of experience for all concerned.

B. SOME ASPECTS OF THE PERFORMANCE OF THE AFRICAN ECONOMY, 1986-1990

13. Taken as a whole, the performance of the African economies from 1986 to 1990, the period of the Programme of Action, was not satisfactory, with overall growth averaging less than 2.5 per cent a year. The economic performance of the African economy was, it is true, somewhat better than during the period 1980-1985. But output, in per capita terms, continued to fall.

14. The decrease in overall performance was in part accounted for by the unsatisfactory export situation. While 1986-1990 export volume increased an average of 10 per cent a year above that of the period 1981-1985, representing an annual growth of almost 4 per cent, earnings from exports were 18 per cent lower, which represented an annual average decline of 6 per cent. Trade gains fell below expectations by an amount exceeding 50 billion United States dollars. Furthermore, in many key commodity areas, Africa suffered a decline in market share.

15. The benefits of reform in the vital agricultural sector, though often positive, were limited in certain countries by such factors as natural disasters, war or civil strife and a fall in prices from export crops. The human condition of many millions of Africans continued to worsen. Absolute poverty rose in Africa. If present trends hold, Africa risks becoming, by 1995, in terms of human deprivation, the most afflicted region in the world. African Governments made efforts to improve public services. Some progress was recorded in certain areas, as was indicated by the United Nations Development Programme in the Human Development Report 1990, 7/ but taken as a whole, the results were insufficient.

16. It would, however, be wrong to paint a totally sombre picture of the economic results of the 1986-1990 period. Growth of output in the majority of African economies had begun, by 1989-1990, to equal or exceed population growth. Important policy reforms had been undertaken and priority given to the restoration of infrastructure and human investment together with measures to encourage enterprise. The quantitative decline of export volumes that was typical of the 1970s and the deterioration of basic public services that characterized the 1981-1985 period have, in a majority of cases, been halted or partially reversed. Requirements for good governance, human investment, an enabling environment and the reduction of absolute poverty are being articulated and brought into operation. A sounder basis for greater production and for improvement in the human condition now exist in many African countries. Recent developments in the world political situation and on the continent give hope for drastic cuts in military expenditures. There is broad agreement everywhere that people are both the objective of and the most important means to the development and improvement of their living

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7/ UNDP, Human Development Report 1990 (Oxford and New York, Oxford University Press, 1990.

standards. The convictions of Africans on this are reflected in the Khartoum Declaration: Towards A Human-focused Approach to Socio-economic Recovery and Development, 8/ adopted in 1988, the African Alternative Framework to Structural Adjustment Programmes for Socio-economic Recovery and Transformation, 5/ adopted in 1989, and the African Charter for Popular Participation in Development and Transformation, 9/ adopted in 1990.

C. ACTIONS OF THE AFRICAN COUNTRIES

Policy reforms

17. A majority of the African countries initiated and carried out substantial policy transformations during the 1986-1990 period. These have emphasized rationalization and liberalization of prices, especially exchange rates, food price structures and interest rates; prioritization of public expenditure towards human investment and infrastructure; and, where practicable, reduction of military expenditure. These policy reforms also aim at more efficient public sector management, enabling measures to facilitate enterprise and production and the broadening of access to economic and political participation (especially for women and poor rural households), and they include measures to reduce poverty, especially absolute poverty.

18. These policy steps were considered necessary, though generally risky and costly in social and political terms. For most countries undertaking and persisting in them, they have halted declines in per capita production. However, when such policies require extended periods of constant or lowered consumption, they face rising domestic opposition. Their continuation is frequently dependent on being able to show enhanced positive results. In a minority of cases, policy transformations have not been attempted or have been abandoned in the face of high initial costs and apparently low positive results in the Programme of Action period. While understandable, in most cases this has led directly to continued decline of the economies and of the conditions of the peoples concerned, while also hampering increased participation and improved governance. While the efforts of the African Governments are key to economic progress, the donor community has a role in supporting these efforts.

Agricultural development and other sectors in support of agriculture

19. In general, agricultural policies and resource allocations have been prioritized. These have included price and marketing structure reforms, restoration of infrastructure, redesigned research and extension services. They also include programmes to increase the resilience of small farmers to adverse economic circumstances. The results have been positive but inadequate - a 4 per cent annual agricultural output growth rate is widely recognized as essential (for example, in the World Bank long-term perspective study 6/) but only 2 per cent has been attained to date. The southern African subregion has reached a 3 per cent trend equal to population growth. Constraints include inadequate technical knowledge; inefficient research and extension; falling world prices; inadequate access to inputs, despite services

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8/ A/43/430, annex I.

9/ A/45/427, annex, appendix II.

prioritization to domestic capacity rehabilitation; limited effective access of the poor, especially access by women farmers to agriculture services and markets; inadequate financial resource availability at both national and farm-household level; and high-cost public and private sector marketing systems.

Drought, desertification and environment

20. Drought, desertification and environmental degradation have received attention based on fuller recognition that Africa is more threatened by them than is any other region. However, improved water conservation and use, afforestation and family forestry as part of mixed farming, crop pattern alteration to lower vulnerability to drought, and other measures have had limited results. This is partly a factor of limited knowledge and experience and the short time since priorities were changed; but it also reflects the lack of resources to implement policies and the impact of pressure to export. Often, the result has been further soil impoverishment.

Human resources and human conditions

21. The rise in the proportion of people in absolute poverty to 30 per cent in Africa and 60 per cent in the worst afflicted countries demonstrates the impact of war, drought and resource shortages. In countries ravaged by war and natural calamities, in spite of efforts by the donor community to provide improved early warning systems and increased emergency assistance, the scarcity of food supplies led to famine. In some countries, emergency relief assistance could not be provided quickly enough to avert the displacement of large numbers of persons and prevent casualties. Food for work (paid in cash or food) programmes have been devised and implemented at the micro-level, as well as more generally in some States, to help rehabilitate drought, flood and war victims.

22. Priority attention to human development - both in resource allocations and in restructuring to improve efficiency and access to basic services - has been a central theme in over half the African States. It has halted the rapid decline in access to basic services and the deterioration in their quality that occurred during the period 1981-1985, but has achieved clear improvements in only a minority of cases. In many cases, efficiency-improving policies were only partially employed, partly because they required resources that were not available.

23. Human-centred concerns, such as those expressed during the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace and in the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, have deeply influenced African thinking. Appropriate programmes are now emerging and policy rethinking is more generally in process. However, the results to date are limited, partly because of brief experience and partly because integrating new elements into mainline programmes - especially in agriculture, education and employment - has proven difficult. In the context of limited increase in resources for all programmes, difficult choices must be made in allocating available resources, often resulting in cuts in existing activities. Only in health services has reorientation to support the needs of women and children made sustained progress over the 1986-1990 period, notably in mother and child health care and immunization.

24. Population policies have been adopted by most African Governments. However, it is unclear how much impact they have had to date. The link between the provision of educational and technical services, on the one hand,

and other key elements such as reduced infant mortality, enhanced food security, reduced malnutrition and enhanced female education, on the other hand, remains to be adequately worked out in a majority of cases. In cases where the link has been articulated and applied, there is evidence of a rapidly increasing use of services and declining family size. It is generally realized in Africa and by Africa's development partners that Africa's rapid rate of population growth, averaging over 3 per cent per year, slows the rate of Africa's recovery and development, thus constituting a development issue to be dealt with seriously. During the period of the Programme of Action, there has been a clear downward trend in per capita health spending in real dollar terms, despite gains made in such areas as mother and child health care and immunization. Some diseases made a resurgence in Africa in the 1980s as health expenditures declined, with roughly two out of every three Africans now suffering from one or more debilitating diseases. The problem of declining health services is exacerbated by the continuing phenomenon of the "brain drain" with respect to trained personnel in the health field.

25. Over the 1986-1990 period, war imposed heavy human as well as financial costs on Africa (45 billion dollars in southern Africa alone, according to United Nations estimates). As of 1990, efforts to achieve peace have made substantial progress in southern Africa and other parts of the continent. The consolidation of survival policies and infrastructural safeguards is crucial in those areas, as is their more effective pursuit in the remaining war-ravaged States.

Trade and commodities

26. African States have given priority to policies to restore export growth. The quantitative rise in export growth to 4 per cent indicates considerable success. Unfortunately, declines in terms of trade have more than cancelled out this achievement in real export-value terms. African States have sought to act on the Programme of Action priority focus of commodity market improvement. Market prices for basic commodities, in general, continued to fall. Compensation or stabilization schemes were unable to compensate for declining commodity revenues during the period of the Programme of Action. African Governments were unable to move rapidly towards structural diversification and transformation of export patterns. Furthermore, Africa has in many cases lost market share in the face of new sources of competition, although some countries have adopted policies to regain it.

Debt service

27. African States have developed a common set of guidelines for agreed debt and debt-service reduction (African Common Position on Africa's External Debt Crisis (1987)), 10/ which was updated in 1989 and discussed at the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly, and they have devoted on average 30 per cent of export earnings to debt service. The 30 per cent of export earnings paid out covered only about 60 per cent of the debt service payable. The balance was largely rescheduled in ways that stretched out the repayments of the obligations without reducing them or it was added onto rising arrears balances. The Programme of Action goal of resolving the African external debt crisis remains largely unmet. External debt (largely from increased arrears, rescheduled amounts and accrued interest) rose 35 per cent between 1986 and

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10/ A/42/874, annex II.

1990. Although many donor countries cancelled or rescheduled debt on concessional terms, both before and during the Programme of Action period - for example, at the Third Francophone Conference of Heads of State and Government, held at Dakar in May 1989 - in accordance, inter alia, with relevant United Nations resolutions, a substantial portion of that external debt remains extremely difficult to service. The debt burden complicated Africa's task of increasing investment and rational planning with respect to fiscal and external accounts. A number of creditor countries and institutions have recently put forward proposals involving greater debt and debt-service reduction for low-income countries, many of which are located in Africa. Since 1985, the Paris Club has eased the terms on which official bilateral debt is rescheduled for the severely indebted low-income countries, many of which are located in Africa. In June 1988, at the Toronto Economic Summit, the group of seven major industrialized countries reached an agreement consisting of options to be chosen by creditor countries, which include partial write-offs, longer repayment periods and concessional interest rates. 11/ At the Second United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, in September 1990, there was a call for the cancellation of all official bilateral debt owed by least developed countries and other low-income countries that faced severe debt problems and were implementing sound economic policies in the context of International Monetary Fund programmes. 12/ Another proposal was made to modify the Toronto terms of rescheduling by Paris Club creditors in a number of ways. In 1991, the group of seven major industrialized countries agreed on the need for additional debt-relief measures, going well beyond the relief already granted under the Toronto terms. The Trinidad and Tobago terms, 13/ proposed in September 1990, as well as other proposals, are now under consideration in the Paris Club. An early agreement on these proposals, combined with appropriate adjustment actions by the African countries themselves, would make a genuine contribution to improving the economic prospects of the countries concerned. More recently, bolder initiatives, such as the recent debt-reduction agreements, have aroused high expectations among debt-distressed countries in Africa. The Personal Representative of the Secretary-General on debt proposed the cancellation of 90 per cent of the bilateral debt service of poor countries and the conversion of the remainder to highly concessional long-term loans. He also proposed that Toronto-type debt relief should be extended to African middle-income countries, as well as more concessional development financing.

Social and political stability

28. Problems associated with governance, accountability and the international economic environment have constrained African growth and development. These problems have hampered domestic savings and private investment flows, which are critical for increased productivity and growth. There is recognition within Africa of the link between improved governance and accountability, a favourable international economic environment and successful long-term development. There has been progress in improving participation and stability in Africa during the period of the Programme of Action. The number of States severely affected by war has been reduced. The freedom of people to

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11/ See A/43/435-S/19974.

12/ See A/CONF.147/18, part one, sect. III.C.

13/ See A/45/803.

pursue their daily lives and livelihood without fear of violence or arbitrary intervention by any person or institution has risen. Participation and human rights have been endorsed in the African Charter for Popular Participation in Development and Transformation. 9/ Progress in policies and practices to promote participation and make rights more secure is visible in many States. The enjoyment of human rights under the rule of law is becoming more strongly enshrined.

Implementation at the regional and subregional levels

29. Subregional and regional implementation have received significant attention, especially in eastern and southern Africa. The small size of virtually all African States means that many common goals can be pursued more efficiently in common, or on a coordinated basis, than separately. The Preferential Trade Area for Eastern and Southern African States has made significant progress towards enabling trade expansion via tariff preference, commercial clearing facilitation and documentary plus procedural harmonization. The Southern African Development Coordination Conference has coordinated transport and communications rehabilitation and development, knowledge creation (especially in agriculture and food security), production expansion and the mobilization of domestic and external finance for regionally identified priority projects, with substantial positive results. Other groupings - the Economic Community of West African States, the Arab Maghreb Union, the Union of Central African States and the Economic Community of Central African States - have had important results. The Organization of African Unity has increased its economic policy analysis and coordination capacity, leading to the African Common Position on Africa's External Debt Crisis (1987) 10/ and to the adoption on 3 June 1991 at Abuja, Nigeria, of the Treaty establishing the African Economic Community.

D. ACTIONS OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

Governments of resource-transferring countries

Resource flows

30. Donor Governments understood the need in the Programme of Action for complementary resources to support the reforms and transformations to which the African States have committed themselves. A significant number have sought to act accordingly and have maintained or increased real resource transfers via official development assistance since 1985, despite, in several cases, significant budgetary constraints of their own. They have remained committed to Africa in the context of new needs in western Asia, as well as in central and eastern Europe. However, despite the fact that sub-Saharan African countries received, on a per capita basis, significantly larger official development assistance than other low- and middle-income countries and despite a 50 per cent current price increase in official development assistance to sub-Saharan Africa, the effects of this assistance have not met expectations.

31. Bilateral official development assistance, broadly defined, rose in current prices from 10.6 to 16.8 billion dollars. However, in constant 1986 prices, the change was from 13.1 to 13.9 billion dollars, only marginally over 1 per cent per year. Meanwhile, net export credits fell 50 per cent even in current terms, from over 2 billion dollars in 1985 to 1 billion dollars in 1990. Net private flows other than from non-governmental

organizations fell from 1.8 billion dollars to 1.4 billion dollars in current prices. Non-governmental organization flows rose in current terms from 1 billion to 1.6 billion dollars, or about 1 per cent per year in constant price terms.

Trade and commodities

32. Action to enhance African market access and diversification of exports and to reduce instability and catastrophic falls in commodity prices, as well as to provide compensatory finance for declines, was featured prominently in the Programme of Action. Protectionist barriers persist. African economies still depend on commodity exports, and diversification represents one of the highest priorities. The Stabex 14/ and Sysmin 15/ systems and the Swiss Compensatory Financing Programme already exist. Various constraints, including conditionality and interest rates, restrict access to International Monetary Fund compensatory facilities. After having reached a peak in the 1970s, commodity prices have collapsed to unprecedentedly low levels. Although exports grew in volume by 10 per cent during the 1986-1990 period over the 1981-1985 period, the share of African exports in world trade was dropping dramatically during the 1986-1990 period.

Debt obligations

33. Debt discussion has continued, and in the past two years creditor country positions have altered significantly. In order to strengthen efforts to relieve the debt burden, creditor countries have presented a number of proposals for further debt alleviation. The proposed Trinidad and Tobago terms 13/ would provide for a 50 per cent debt-burden reduction - by write-offs, interest-rate cuts or repayment spread-out - on official debt, including guaranteed export credits for low-income debt-distressed countries pursuing serious policy reforms and transformations. Recent debt-reduction agreements take similar approaches to debt-distressed middle- and low-income countries. Some donor countries have proposed cuts of up to 80 per cent for the most severely debt-distressed low-income sub-Saharan African economies. The Trinidad and Tobago terms envisage similar cuts in commercial external debt, with the present secondary market price (usually under 25 per cent of face value for debt-distressed countries and under 10 per cent for several African ones) as the starting point. Some buy-ups, by individual donors or under World Bank auspices, have taken place.

34. These shifts have been too recent to have a major impact to date. However, they do augur well for the 1990s. About 3 per cent of Africa's debt burden was cancelled or rescheduled at concessional interest rates over the 1986-1990 period. Because this was largely on concessional loans, debt service due was reduced by under 2 per cent and debt service actually being paid was reduced by only 1 per cent. Other rescheduling did not reduce the total burden of payment (indeed by lengthening the period over which interest was payable, the rescheduling often raised it) but simply shifted it forward, providing some relief from arrears build-up for a year or two at a time.

14/ System of stabilization of export earnings.

15/ System for stabilizing export earnings in the mining sector.

Technical and other external assistance

35. Technical assistance was approximately 25 per cent of official development assistance throughout the period. Problems remained, such as inadequate recipient participation in the selection of experts and the accountability of technical assistance personnel to national institutions and in the decision-making processes in Africa. The enhanced number of donor-paid and other technical-assistance personnel and the increased hiring of African nationals for such posts did increase short-term capability but at the price of fragmenting national policy formulation and implementation and of threatening longer-term African institutional and public service capacity-building. More positively, joint ventures with African training institutions and the creation, by the African Development Bank, the United Nations Development Programme and the World Bank, of the African Capacity Building Foundation were encouraging developments.

United Nations system

36. The United Nations system - including the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund - sought to influence and to support African efforts to regain development through structural adjustment and transformation of policies and resource allocations. Multilateral official development finance rose from 5.3 billion dollars in 1985 to 8.5 billion dollars in 1990 or from 5.8 billion dollars to 6.5 billion dollars in 1986 constant prices.

37. A substantial portion of the increase was centred on the World Bank, whose lending increased from an overall average of about 1.8 billion dollars during the 1981-1985 fiscal period to around 3 billion dollars during the 1986-1991 fiscal period. With respect to International Development Association replenishments eight and nine, sub-Saharan Africa's share of a sustained constant total was raised from 33 per cent to 50 per cent. In addition, the World Bank spearheaded a Special Programme of Assistance for Africa to mobilize and coordinate bilateral funds, which provided 18 billion dollars in adjustment assistance and debt relief to twenty-three eligible African countries between 1988 and 1990. The World Bank also helped fund the African Capacity Building Foundation to assist in developing the central economic analysis and management units in African Governments.

38. The International Monetary Fund reduced net drawings by African States by 2 billion dollars during the 1985-1990 period. While 8-9 per cent short-term drawings were unsuitable for African requirements, the Structural Adjustment Facility and its extended version, which are long-term low-interest facilities, remain less than half-utilized and did not fully offset reduction in standard terms drawings.

39. Other United Nations agencies raised disbursements on behalf of Africa to about 1.5 billion dollars and to 50 per cent of all resources provided globally, in particular through special programmes for African countries affected by drought and desertification. While their programmes were focused mainly on and tested against the Programme of Action goals, they were limited in constant-price terms. This limitation flowed from the financial stringency confronting most United Nations agencies, and the United Nations Development Programme in particular, during the period 1986-1990.

South-South cooperation

40. Global South-South cooperation with Africa was enhanced during the 1986-1990 period. The focus was primarily on southern African economic and human survival in the face of destabilization. The Action for Resisting Invasion, Colonialism and Apartheid Fund 16/ established by the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries raised and disbursed not insignificant resources in this respect. Bilaterally, several South economies provided substantial technical and financial support to Africa.

Non-governmental organizations

41. Non-governmental organizations, as noted, increased resource transfers to Africa. In some cases these transfers assisted the strengthening of African non-governmental organizations and worked in partnership with or through them. In the North, the non-governmental organizations were among the most effective publicists and resource mobilizers for Africa in general and the Programme of Action in particular. The International Conference on Popular Participation in the Recovery and Development Process in Africa, held at Arusha in February 1990, marked the recognition by both African and cooperating States that African non-governmental organizations and similar groupings had a crucial role in transforming human-centred development and good governance from goals into realities. 9/

Structural adjustment programmes

42. Structural adjustment describes a set of actions by African Governments responding to their perceptions of the policy requirements needed to restore economic balance and to mobilize external resources for recovery and structural transformation. Likewise, structural adjustment programmes incorporated the views of the World Bank and bilateral resource donors of the macroeconomic policy weaknesses that hampered effective response to economic shocks in many African States.

43. Prior to 1985, structural adjustment programmes, as the World Bank acknowledged in the long-term perspective study, 6/ were often too short term in approach and, as a result, depended too heavily on demand reduction. Since 1985 there has been a shift towards supply expansion, initially underwritten largely by external resource flows but, subsequently, partly by renewed growth of domestic output. Human investment and poverty reduction have emerged as major themes in structural adjustment and increased effort is being devoted to integrating them with the other macroeconomic policy goals.

44. Structural adjustment programmes, when also oriented towards the medium- and long-term development needs of the countries that have been implementing them and when persisted in, have, on average, resulted in output growth equal to or above population growth and also in significant increases in external resource inflows. Equally, most have resulted in a halting of previous declines in human investment and basic services spending. But their record on reduction of inflation, reduction of trade deficits and a reduction in numbers of people living in absolute poverty is much more uneven and not yet satisfactory, as the World Bank long-term perspective study 6/ notes. How to resolve these problems and to ensure that new rounds of African-owned country programmes achieve both sustainable growth and a substantial improvement in the human condition is a crucial question for the 1990s, which the African

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16/ Also called the Africa Fund.

Governments, the World Bank, the United Nations Development Programme, and other resource providers are focusing on in national consultative groups, round-table discussions and other forums.

II. UNITED NATIONS NEW AGENDA FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF AFRICA IN THE 1990S

A. PREAMBLE

1. The final review and appraisal of the implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990 offers yet another opportunity for renewing the commitment of the international community to support Africa's own efforts to achieve self-sustaining socio-economic growth and development. It is also an occasion to refocus world attention on the socio-economic difficulties which continue to face the African countries. Africa's development is primarily the responsibility of Africans. The international community accepts the principle of shared responsibility and full partnership with Africa and therefore commits itself to giving full and tangible support to the African efforts.

2. The circumstances which led to the adoption of the Programme of Action are as valid today as they were in 1986. Assessments made by African countries themselves or by the Secretary-General and many other organizations and independent observers point to the fact that Africa's socio-economic conditions actually worsened overall over the past five years of the Programme of Action period.

3. The current critical economic situation in Africa calls for solidarity among States Members to act in concert to address the problem. The international community renews its efforts to assist Africa, as enunciated under the Programme of Action and in General Assembly resolution 43/27 of 18 November 1988, in which the Assembly stated, inter alia, that "the African economic crisis is one that concerns the international community as a whole" and that "the Programme of Action provides an important framework for cooperation between Africa and the international community", which needs to be renewed in the 1990s.

4. That is why the international community and the countries of Africa should renew their commitment to an agenda of cooperation for sustainable social and economic development of Africa in the 1990s. The agenda is specific and clearly focused on goals and targets to be achieved within that time-frame.

5. A desirable objective should be an average real growth rate of at least 6 per cent per annum of gross national product throughout the period of the New Agenda in order for the continent to achieve sustained and sustainable economic growth and equitable development, increase income and eradicate poverty.

6. The New Agenda has as its priority objectives the accelerated transformation, integration, diversification and growth of the African economies, in order to strengthen them within the world economy, reduce their vulnerability to external shocks and increase their dynamism, internalize the process of development and enhance self-reliance.

7. The New Agenda also accords special attention to human development and increased productive employment, and promotes rapid progress towards the

achievement of human-oriented goals by the year 2000 in the areas of life expectancy, integration of women in development, child and maternal mortality, nutrition, health, water and sanitation, basic education and shelter.

8. Peace is an indispensable prerequisite for development. The end of the cold war has opened up opportunites for the peaceful resolution of conflicts and for the intensification of international cooperation for development, particularly with Africa. Peace initiatives by African countries should be encouraged and pursued in order to bring an end to war, destabilization and internal conflicts so as to facilitate the creation of optimal conditions for development. The international community as a whole should endeavour to cooperate with and support the efforts of African countries for a rapid restoration of peace, normalization of life for uprooted populations and national socio-economic reconstruction. Resources freed from military expenditures in all countries can be redirected to socio-economic growth and development.

9. In order to achieve these broad objectives, it is necessary for the international community to enter into a new and stronger accord with Africa, which would spell out clearly the firm commitment of the international community to support and assist Africa in its efforts to implement successfully its development agenda and to reduce, if not entirely eliminate, external impediments and obstacles to Africa's accelerated socio-economic transformation. This New Agenda reflects a mutuality of commitments and accountability and is in two parts: what Africa commits itself to do and what the international community commits itself to do.

B. INTERNATIONAL AGENDA

1. Africa's responsibility and commitment

(a) Achievement of sustained and sustainable growth and development

10. Africa is committed to the implementation of policies for the transformation of the structure of its economies in order to achieve growth and development on a sustained and sustainable basis. African countries will persist with necessary reforms and pursue improvement of domestic economic management, including effective mobilization and utilization of domestic resources.

(b) Promotion of regional and subregional economic cooperation and integration

11. Africa is resolved to pursue with vigour the policy of achieving effective regional and subregional economic cooperation and integration and is thus committed to the establishment of the African Economic Community - the treaty of which was signed by African leaders on 3 June 1991 at Abuja, Nigeria - and to the effective functioning of its subregional organizations - namely, the Preferential Trade Area of Eastern and Southern African States, the Economic Community of West African States, the Arab Maghreb Union and the Southern African Development Coordination Conference. Africa believes that regional and subregional cooperation and integration will bring about effective transformation of its economies.

12. Africa is committed to the promotion of the sectorial integration of its economies and to ensuring the development and maintenance of reliable networks

of agricultural, physical, industrial and institutional infrastructures on the continent. Africa will focus its efforts on the implementation of programmes for the Second Transport and Communications Decade in Africa and the Second Industrial Development Decade for Africa.

(c) Intensification of the democratization process

13. Africa is determined to press ahead with the democratization of development and the full implementation of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, the African Charter for Popular Participation in Development and Transformation, 9/ and the Declaration of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity on the Political and Socio-economic Situation in Africa and the Fundamental Changes Taking Place in the World, adopted on 11 July 1990. Africa is convinced that growth and development on a sustained and sustainable basis can come about only as a result of the full participation of the people in the development process, and to this end continues to be committed to pursuing the process of democratization.

(d) Investment promotion

14. Africa is also committed to the creation of an enabling environment that attracts foreign and domestic direct investment, encourages savings, induces the return of flight capital and promotes the full participation by the private sector, including non-governmental organizations, in the growth and development process. Farmers - in particular, small farmers - informal-sector traders and crafts people, and entrepreneurs constitute important elements in the productive base of the economy.

(e) Human dimension

15. Africa is equally committed to improving the human rights and the living standards of its people, including the reduction of poverty. Africa is further committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for women at all levels and giving adequate attention to the needs of children.

16. African countries are committed to the intensification of their efforts in human resource development and capacity-building, especially in science, technology and management, and to taking measures to arrest and reverse the brain drain.

(f) Environment and development

17. Africa is fully committed to the promotion of sustainable development at all levels of socio-economic activity. Through the Bamako Convention, adopted on 30 January 1991 at Bamako, Africa took the decisive step of banning the import of toxic waste into Africa. Moreover, the Plan of Action to Combat Desertification 17/ remains a viable framework for cooperation in the field of desertification. The international community is called upon to contribute more effectively to the implementation of the Plan. The programme of relevant subregional organizations should continue to receive the full support of Africa and the international community. Africa is keenly participating in international negotiations on climate change, bio-diversity and the

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17/ Report of the United Nations Conference on Desertification, Nairobi, 29 August-9 September 1977 (A/CONF.74/36), chap. I.

preparatory process of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, to be held in 1992. In all these negotiations, Africa is fully convinced that the problems of environment and development should be tackled in an integrated and balanced manner, fully taking into account the "polluter pays" principle.

(g) Population and development

18. Africa is committed to the deliberate and systematic integration of population factors into the development process in order, inter alia, to contain the tremendous strain and stress that a rapid rate of population growth puts on development. To that end, Africa will continue the efforts initiated in 1984 under the Kilimanjaro Programme of Action for African Population and Self-Reliant Development, 18/ which currently constitutes Africa's framework for devising and implementing national population policies in all their interrelated aspects, including a reduction in maternal and child mortality and provisions for family planning and female education and the achievement of substantial and sustained increases in the quality of life and standard of living of the entire population. In this regard, reference is also made to the Amsterdam Declaration on a Better Life for Future Generations, adopted by the International Forum on Population in the Twenty-first Century, held at Amsterdam from 6 to 9 November 1989. 19/

(h) Agriculture, rural development and food security

19. Africa is committed to the continued pursuit of policies and strategies in the agricultural and rural development sectors in order fully to integrate rural economies into their national contexts and to achieve food security and strengthen self-reliance in food. Africa is committed to the improvement of agricultural policies, the enhancement of agricultural productivity, the improvement of distribution mechanisms, and the establishment of reliable market schemes, credit system and adequate storage facilities. Efforts will be made to provide food producers - particularly women - with the necessary resources.

(i) South-South cooperation

20. Africa is determined to intensify South-South cooperation which Africa is convinced is an indispensable element for the success of the New Agenda for international cooperation.

(j) Role of non-governmental organizations

21. The focus of the International Agenda on popular participation, human resource development and capacity-building calls for an increased role for non-governmental organizations (African and non-African) in various areas, including the promotion of indigenous small-scale businesses, especially in the rural sector, community development projects, training etc. African non-governmental organizations should particularly be involved, without any administrative impediment, in the mobilization and efficient utilization of domestic resources.

18/ E/CONF.76/6, annex V.

19/ A/C.2/44/6, annex.

2. Responsibility and commitment of the international community

22. The international community commits itself to assisting Africa in its efforts to achieve accelerated growth and human-centred development on a sustained and sustainable basis. Such support will cover the areas discussed below.

(a) Solution of Africa's debt problem

23. Africa's debt burden constitutes a critical bottleneck constraining the recovery and development of the continent. Therefore, a major priority is to tackle Africa's external debt problem which is a serious threat to the continent's recovery and long-term development prospects. In spite of the implementation of several international initiatives, the situation has not significantly improved. Africa's external debt exceeded 270 billion dollars in 1990, with the ratio of external debt to gross domestic product and to exports amounting to over 90 per cent and 334 per cent, respectively. The servicing of this debt accounts for over 30 per cent of the continent's exports.

24. This situation calls for innovative and bold measures to solve Africa's debt problems and the intensification of efforts in the context of the evolving international debt strategy on the part of all concerned. The international community, therefore, in support of Africa's economic reform efforts, undertakes to seek to find durable solutions to the African debt crisis.

25. At the London Economic Summit in July 1991, 20/ the group of seven major industrialized countries agreed that Africa deserved special attention. Participants called for additional debt relief measures in favour of the poorest, most indebted countries, that go well beyond the Toronto terms. It called on the Paris Club to continue its discussion on how these measures can best be implemented promptly.

26. Recognizing the magnitude of Africa's debt problem, the measures envisioned by this New Agenda include:

(a) A further cancellation or reduction of official development assistance debt and debt service;

(b) Additional relief for official bilateral debt or debt service;

(c) Encouragement of the write-off of private commercial debt and the use of such techniques as debt-equity swaps, the use of debt where appropriate for the establishment of export-oriented joint ventures, debt buy-backs, debt for environment schemes and debt for poverty alleviation through greater use of the appropriate facilities;

(d) Serious consideration to continuing to work towards a growth-oriented solution of the problems of African developing countries with serious debt-servicing problems, including those whose debt is mainly to official creditors or to multilateral institutions;

20/ See A/46/309-S/22807, annex I.

(e) Early implementation of the International Monetary Fund quota increase under the Ninth General Review and the associated Third Amendment to the Articles of Agreement.

27. Additional measures should take into account the need for Africa to benefit from new financial flows, particularly official development assistance.

28. The international community should continue to give serious consideration to the proposal calling for the organization of an international conference on Africa's external indebtedness.

(b) Resource flows

29. A critical element of the support from the international community is the provision of adequate resource flows to Africa. These resources are needed to contribute to achieving sustained real growth in gross national product per capita. To achieve an average annual growth rate of real gross national product of at least 6 per cent by African countries over the course of the 1990s the Secretary-General has estimated that a minimum of 30 billion dollars in net official development assistance is required in 1992, after which the real net official development assistance would need to grow at an average rate of 4 per cent per annum. The international community undertakes to pursue its efforts to provide additional resource flows to Africa which will complement domestic efforts and financial resources, bearing in mind these targets. The international community also reaffirms its commitment to work in order to attain the accepted United Nations targets of devoting 0.7 per cent of gross national product to official development assistance as well as the agreed targets established at the Second United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries. 21/

30. The international community would introduce measures and devise programmes to encourage direct foreign investment in African countries and support the policy changes undertaken by African countries to attract foreign investment.

(c) Commodities

31. Diversification is a strategic short- and long-term solution to the severe commodity problem in Africa which has impeded its economic recovery and development. In order to support effectively efforts to diversify commodity exports and boost earnings, the international community, particularly the major trading partners, commit themselves to grant improved market access to Africa's exports through substantial reduction in or removal of trade barriers. To this end, the international community should ensure an early balanced and successful conclusion of the Uruguay Round. The international community commits itself to correct imperfections in commodity markets.

32. In the short term, the international community recognizes the importance of compensatory financing through such schemes as the Compensatory and Contingency Financing Facility of the International Monetary Fund, Stabex, 14/ Sysmin 15/ and the Swiss Compensatory Financing Programme and, where appropriate, will examine the means of improving the scope and operations of these schemes. Efforts at international cooperation among

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21/ See A/CONF.147/18.

producers and consumers of commodities of particular importance to Africa should be renewed, with a view to increasing export earnings of Africa from such commodities through processing and technical assistance.

(d) Support for the diversification of the African economies

33. Diversification of the African economies provides a major way out of commodity export dependence and its related problems and contributes to the achievement of more dynamic and resilient economies. While such diversification is primarily the responsibility of African countries, the international community recognizes that additional resources will be required to support Africa's diversification programmes, including development of specific infrastructural and support services and the development of information networks and related services for diversification programmes and projects.

34. The international community notes the proposal that an African diversification fund should be established to provide an essential focal point to galvanize the technical assistance that is required and to provide additional finance for the development and implementation of diversification programmes and projects.

35. A study on the need for and the feasibility of the establishment of a diversification fund for Africa's commodities should urgently be undertaken by the Secretary-General for presentation in 1993 to the General Assembly together with the comments and observations of Member States. The international community will continue to support Africa's effort.

(e) Trade

36. In order to support effectively efforts to diversify Africa's economies and to boost export earnings, the international community commits itself to a substantial reduction in or removal of tariff and non-tariff barriers affecting African exports, particularly of processed, semi-processed and manufactured products, and to ensure continued preferential arrangements currently enjoyed by African exports. To this end, the international community should ensure an early balanced and successful conclusion of the Uruguay Round.

(f) Support for regional economic integration: environment, science and technology

37. The international community intends to support African countries in their efforts to establish the African Economic Community, strengthen the functioning of the existing subregional intergovernmental organizations and implement joint programmes and projects.

38. Support will also be given to arresting environmental degradation and to enhancing the scientific and technological capacities of African countries.

(g) Role of the United Nations system

39. The United Nations system should play a major role in the implementation of the International Agenda. First and foremost, the various United Nations organizations and specialized agencies, in their respective areas and sectors, should devise specific programmes for Africa which are consistent with the elements of the Agenda, and devote adequate resources for their

implementation. In this regard, special consideration should be given to programmes that are essential in fostering the economic integration of the African region, such as those related to the Second Industrial Development Decade for Africa and the Second Transport and Communications Decade in Africa, as well as other relevant programmes submitted by regional and subregional organizations.

40. The United Nations system should also contribute to ensuring an efficient follow-up and monitoring of the implementation of the International Agenda. Specifically, a continuous assessment of Africa's performance in the areas outlined in the Agenda would have a great impact in maintaining the momentum within and outside Africa and, eventually, for renewed commitments to the agreed objectives and targets.

(h) Role of non-African non-governmental organizations

41. Non-African non-governmental organizations should be given every encouragement to assist in the formulation and implementation of development assistance projects in the context of the International Agenda. They should also assist in promoting non-governmental organizations at the national, subregional and regional levels in Africa.

C. FOLLOW-UP, MONITORING AND EVALUATION MACHINERY

42. The follow-up, monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the New Agenda will require the full involvement of Governments, organizations and programmes of the United Nations system as well as the participation of intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations.

43. To that end the following arrangements for the evaluation, assessment and monitoring of the New Agenda are adopted:

(a) In 1993 the General Assembly will conduct a preliminary consideration of the implementation of the New Agenda;

(b) In 1995 the Economic and Social Council will devote part of its high-level segment to the consideration of the implementation of the New Agenda;

(c) In 1996 the General Assembly will conduct a mid-term review of the implementation of the New Agenda;

(d) In 1998 the Economic and Social Council will devote part of its high-level segment to the implementation of the New Agenda;

(e) In the year 2000 the General Assembly will conduct the final review and assessment of the implementation of the New Agenda.

44. For the mid-term review in 1996 and the final review and assessment in the year 2000, the General Assembly will take the necessary measures, including, if required, the establishment of an ad hoc committee for the preparation of these reviews.

45. The Secretary-General, taking into account the relevant inputs from relevant organs, organizations and programmes of the United Nations system and other competent bodies, will provide an analytical assessment of the

implementation of the New Agenda and make concrete recommendations thereon to the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, according to the arrangements outlined in paragraph 43 above.

46. The assessment and recommendations of the Organization of African Unity on the implementation of the New Agenda will also be submitted to the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council.

47. The Secretary-General will ensure appropriate and adequate support for the follow-up process, including the continuation of the effective public information activities and mobilization of efforts to raise international awareness of the economic crisis in Africa.

48. The ongoing initiatives aimed at assisting Africa in its development efforts should be encouraged. In this regard, consultative groups such as the Global Coalition for Africa should assist in rallying international support for the implementation of the New Agenda. The Global Coalition for Africa may be invited to attend the meetings of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council devoted to the New Agenda for Africa.